

G2 set of rabbits received 100 µg of hexavalent vaccine in CFA subcutaneously as an initial injection and then booster injections of the same dose in saline were given at 4 and 3 weeks. Blood was obtained prior to the first injection and at 2-week intervals thereafter.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 14, with the following rewritten paragraph:

G3 -- Figures 7A and 7B show a nucleic acid sequence (SEQ ID NO:15) and predicted amino acid sequence (SEQ ID NO:16) of a hexavalent M protein vaccine.--

In the Claims:

Please amend claims 12, 15-17, 19, 21, 23, 27, 36-38, 40, 42, 44, 54, and 56 to read as follows:

G4 Sub H2
12. (Twice Amended) A recombinant fusion polypeptide, comprising:
(a) a multivalent immunogenic portion wherein the immunogenic portion comprises at least two immunogenic polypeptides, the polypeptides comprising at least 10 amino acids and capable of eliciting an immune response against Group A Streptococci; and
(b) a carboxy-terminal polypeptide that protects the immunogenicity of the immunogenic portion, wherein the carboxy-terminal polypeptide is a reiteration of at least one immunogenic polypeptide from the amino-terminal of the immunogenic portion.

Sub I3
G5 15. (Twice Amended) The polypeptide according to claim 12 wherein at least one of the immunogenic polypeptides is from a Group A Streptococci serotype selected from the group consisting of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 22, 24, 28, 30, 48, 49, 52 and 56.

Sub H3
16. (Twice Amended) The polypeptide according to claim 12 wherein the immunogenic portion consists of six immunogenic polypeptides, wherein the polypeptides are an amino-terminal portion of at least one ^{gp. A streptococcal} M protein.

Sub T3
G 17. (Twice Amended) ~~The polypeptide according to any one of claims 12 or 15-16 wherein at least one of the immunogenic polypeptides is from a serotype 11 Group A Streptococci.~~

G 6 Sub T3
19. (Twice Amended) ~~The polypeptide according to any one of claims 12 or 15-16 wherein at least one of the immunogenic polypeptides is from a serotype 13 Group A Streptococci.~~

G 7 Sub T3
21. (Twice Amended) ~~The polypeptide according to any one of claims 12 or 15-16 wherein at least one of the immunogenic polypeptides is from a serotype 22 Group A Streptococci.~~

G 8 Sub T3
23. (Twice Amended) ~~The polypeptide according to any one of claims 12 or 15-16 wherein at least one of the immunogenic polypeptides is from a serotype 28 Group A Streptococci.~~

Sub H1
G 27. (Twice Amended) A composition for promoting an immune response against Group A Streptococci, comprising:

(a) a recombinant fusion polypeptide, comprising:

G (i) a multivalent immunogenic portion wherein the immunogenic portion comprises at least two immunogenic polypeptides, ^{obtained from a group A streptococcal M protein} the polypeptides comprising at least 10 amino acids and capable of eliciting an immune response against Group A Streptococci; and

(ii) a carboxy-terminal polypeptide that protects the immunogenicity of the immunogenic portion, wherein the carboxy-terminal polypeptide is a reiteration of at least one immunogenic polypeptide from the amino-terminal of the immunogenic portion; and

(b) a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient or diluent.

Sub T3
G 10 36. (Twice Amended) ~~The composition according to any one of claims 27 or 30-31 wherein at least one of the immunogenic polypeptides is from a Group A Streptococci~~

serotype selected from the group consisting of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 22, 24, 28, 30, 48, 49, 52 and 56.

Sub H51
G10
37. (Twice Amended) The composition according to any one of claims 27 or 30-31 wherein the immunogenic portion consists of six immunogenic polypeptides, wherein the polypeptides are an amino-terminal portion of at least one M protein. *exp. A streptococcal*

Sub I3
38. (Twice Amended) The composition according to any one of claims 27 or 30-31 wherein at least one of the immunogenic polypeptides is from a serotype 11 Group A Streptococci.

G11 Sub I3
40. (Twice Amended) The composition according to any one of claims 27 or 30-31 wherein at least one of the immunogenic polypeptides is from a serotype 13 Group A Streptococci.

G12 Sub I3
42. (Twice Amended) The composition according to any one of claims 27 or 30-31 wherein at least one of the immunogenic polypeptides is from a serotype 22 Group A Streptococci.

G13 Sub I3
44. (Twice Amended) The composition according to any one of claims 27 or 30-31 wherein at least one of the immunogenic polypeptides is from a serotype 28 Group A Streptococci.

G14 Sub I3
54. (Amended) The polypeptide according to any one of claims 12 or 27 wherein only one immunogenic polypeptide is reiterated.

G15 Sub H61
56. (Amended) The polypeptide according to any one of claims 12 or 27 wherein the immunogenic portion consists of ten immunogenic polypeptides, wherein the polypeptides are an amino-terminal portion of a M protein. *exp. A streptococcal*